

**CHARLIE BAKER**  
GOVERNOR



**KARYN POLITO**  
LT. GOVERNOR

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## **County Sheriffs Endorse Governor Baker's Opioid Legislation**

*Sheriffs call on legislature to pass bill and curb opioid epidemic*

**BOSTON** – As support for his opioid bill rapidly gains momentum, Governor Charlie Baker today received another endorsement from a group of county sheriffs, citing the urgency for more tools to combat the opioid crisis on a statewide basis. The sheriffs met with Governor Baker this morning at the State House to discuss the growing epidemic in their communities and highlight the need for many reforms contained in his landmark legislation.

**Governor Baker**  
**Office of the Governor, Massachusetts State House**  
**November 9, 2015**



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**Transcription:**

*SHERIFF KOUTOUJIAN: We are not doing enough to deal with the issues of opiates. All these sheriffs here – by the way, let me just point out this is not a partisan issue. We stand united together with the Governor about something that will help our communities and help individuals and help families.*

*SHERIFF DONELAN: And I'm sure there isn't one member of the legislature who hasn't attended a regional opiate task force meeting back in their district, and if they have they know that a unified statewide approach is what we need, and I urge my friends in the legislature to take this up and move it forward quickly.*

*SHERIFF CUMMINGS: And I think this Governor's legislation is a first step in getting something done. We're losing more people to opiates than we are to motor vehicle accidents. I mean, we've got to get moving.*

*SHERIFF KOUTOUJIAN: This is something we need to do now, and all of us stand here in unity with our Governor and our Lieutenant Governor to make a strong stand on something that desperately needs attention. As the Governor has said many times, we can't play on the margins. We have to go at the heart of this issue. And there is no time, there is no time like right now to do so.*

On October 15<sup>th</sup>, the administration filed “[An Act Relative to Substance Use Treatment, Education and Prevention](#),” which contains key provisions recommended by the Governor’s Opioid Working Group including limits to prescribing practices for first-time opioid prescriptions, allowing clinicians to treat and assess patients for 72-hours, strengthening the Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP), and amending the civil commitment statute to ensure women in need of substance disorder treatment see providers, not prison.

Since its filing, the bill has gained support from [members of the law enforcement community](#) and [Boston Mayor Martin J. Walsh](#), and will be discussed next week at the Joint Committee on Mental Health and Substance Abuse Hearing on November 16th.

Today, Baker was joined by Sheriffs Michael G. Bellotti, Norfolk; Peter J. Koutoujian, Middlesex County; Thomas M. Hodgson, Bristol County; James M. Cummings, Barnstable County; Joseph D. McDonald, Jr., Plymouth County; Frank G. Cousins, Jr., Essex County; Sheriff Christopher Donelan, Franklin County; and Sheriff Robert J. Garvey, Hampshire County.

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